

Declares
that
Half the
Medical
Profession
Secretly
Do the
Same
in Their
Practice.

DR.
NEHEMIAH
NICKERSON.

A Doctor Who Kills His Patients

to End Suffering.

JUDGE SIMEON B. BALDWIN, of the one of the most distinguished physicians in New England, ex-president of the Meriden Medical Society and ex-superintendent of the Meriden Hospital, communicating upon Judge Baldwin's speech, said not only that he agreed with the Judge, but that he had, more than once, when so requested by patients or their friends, put an end forever to their sufferings.

"Why I Have Helped Suffering Patients Out of the World."

MY POSITION has not been changed by the criticisms of the clergy and some brother physicians. I still think, and always shall, that if a patient is suffering from an incurable disease, and he wants relief from his misery, that a physician is doing a deed of mercy if he helps him to end his life.

That is a proposition that I am prepared to defend. I have equally strong convictions on another proposition which has brought upon me a storm of disapproval.

This is that if a man has no obligations to hold him to this world he has a right to leave it whenever he wishes. I claim that a man has a right to commit suicide without being called a fool or insane.

A physician should never yield to a patient's pleading for death unless he knows that the disease is incurable. My critics raise the question of the fallibility of a physician's judgment. There are some cases in which the physician cannot make a mistake. For instance, he cannot be deceived by the intolerable agonies of the final stage of external cancer.

He knows the hopeless last stages of phthisis. He knows when the death throes of heart disease are approaching. In other cases, when there is the slightest doubt, he should call in a consulting physician.

I have relieved the suffering of a good many patients in the course of my thirty-five years' practice. I shall not say a dozen, nor more, yet, less, and thus bring down a further rain of criticism.

A patient who was near the end with consumption sent for me. She begged that I would not let her suffer the last terrible pangs of the disease. Her husband begged the same favor as piteously as she. I saw that she could not live more than a day or two. I administered chloroform. I kept her under the influence of it from 10 o'clock at night until the end. She died at 4 the next morning—died peacefully and without pain, and her husband thanked me when it was over.

I had a friend, a woman whom I had known all my life. Latterly she was afflicted with heart disease. She asked me to promise that when her final illness came I would not allow her to suffer as she had seen others suffer from heart disease at the last. I promised.

When the end came I attended her and I kept my word. She sent for me at 10 o'clock one morning. I administered chloroform continuously. When

evening came she passed quietly and painlessly away. I had kept my promise, and I was glad I did.

When I was a surgeon in the Federal Army I was assistant officer in charge of a Union hospital in the South. One of our boys was brought in one day, literally almost shot to pieces. His stomach was shot away. There was not the slightest hope that he would recover. He begged that I would "put him out of his misery." I gave him chloroform. It was a humane act.

Such cases might be multiplied, but I will not shock my critics by enumerating them. Suffice it to say that I think the physician who will not relieve the death agonies of, say, a case of external cancer is a brute.

Physicians speak of giving morphine to allay pain. In the advanced stages of some diseases—of which I instance external cancer—the powers of absorption are practically destroyed. Morphine cannot be administered with any effect.

I have always used chloroform in such cases. It dulls the sensitive nerves and the spinal cord and arrests the heart action in systole. Its action is gentle.

Such cases are beyond and above the law. They are not contemplated by it. They are to be settled at the bar of the physician's own judgment.

As for the moral or religious aspect of the case, it is still a matter to be settled by the individual. To be sure, there is in the decalogue a commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." But there are circumstances under which killing is admissible. The United States takes that stand in her war policy. She is killing Filipinos daily in what she calls a humane war. She executes criminals. Her laws excuse murder done in self-defence.

Hence I contend that killing, if you must call it so, to end a patient's inevitable suffering and hasten his certain death, is justifiable.

I object, however, to the classification. Anticipating death by a few hours or days when death is inevitable and is sure to be preceded by intolerable suffering is not murder. It is the highest and broadest humanity.

A young woman told me last week that a relative of hers was dying. He was dying slowly and in such agony that she could not bear to see him again. It was brutal for that man's physician to prolong life under such circum-

stances, agonizing to the patient and harrowing to those about him.

It is a physician's mission to cure disease and alleviate suffering. There is a point beyond which he cannot cure disease. After that it is his duty to alleviate suffering.

Medical science has made great strides away from superstition. Time was when if an unborn child menaced the life of the mother both child and mother were sacrificed. It is different now. The world has grown away from the false standard of duty.

I have been asked whether I agree with those scientists who believe that the insane should be killed to prevent the perpetuation of their species. I do not go so far, but I think that measures should be taken to prevent the perpetuation of their species.

Again, I do not advocate the Spartan method of destroying the children who are born with maimed bodies or imperfect brains in order that a stronger race should be reared.

I am convinced that many physicians, perhaps half, perhaps more, of those engaged in practice do relieve the death agonies of their patients. Those who are severest in their criticisms I believe are among the number.

As to suicide, every man's life is his own. He may do with it what he will, as long as he does not interfere with the rights of others. If he has no obligations—as, for instance the support of a dependent family—I see no



KILLING THE WOUNDED ON THE BATTLE FIELD.

reason why he may not end his life if he wishes.

If his work in the world is done—if he feels that he is through with it—he has a right to die when and in the way he wishes, without being called a fool or insane.

A UNIVERSAL COIN IS NEEDED THE WORLD OVER.

FOR many years commercial men of all nations of which might be entrusted to a nationalities have spoken and written of the introduction of a universal coin.

A universal standard. The proposition has been made to meet with success on account of the difficulty in persuading the people of different countries to abandon their own systems of coinage, which appear to them part and parcel of themselves as much as their language itself.

"The time seems approaching," said a financier, "when it will be possible and perhaps advisable for the world to adopt a universal coin." And adopt a coin which shall be cosmopolitan, the are not by the unfamiliarity of it and fineness of which might be mined by the convention and the their natural bent.

to fix in their minds the comparative value of articles considered in relation to the money they have always handled, but it would be a boon to the great travelling world's public, to our globe-trotting commercial travellers, to opulent tourists and to indigent emigrants.

"The subject of a cosmopolitan coin is not a new one," said a member of a banking firm. "In some of the aspects of the case it appears to be very desirable. It has been suggested that the various commercial nations agree upon a gold coin, of uniform weight and fineness, to be given a name which would be understood in most of the countries agreeing to its coinage. Each country is to coin its own pieces and to be responsible for their accuracy. The coin

is to have on one side the stamp or legend of the country coining it and on the other its universal name. It will readily be seen that with such a coin in universal use, both in practice and accounts, commercial transactions would no doubt be greatly facilitated. I do not look, however, for its early accomplishment. Its desirability is not sufficient to overcome the long established customs of the various countries so as to lead them to relinquish the names and styles of their various coins. Conservative England, for instance, with its cuprous system, is not likely to relinquish its pounds, shillings and pence and adopt the decimal system of France, Germany, Italy and the United States. And it is not likely that the latter would give up their quick and handy decimal system for that of England. On the whole, the idea is a very good one, but, like many other good things—like the proposed metric system, for instance—impossible of accomplishment for various reasons at present."

A WOMAN IS ONE OF CALIFORNIA'S BEST PILOTS.

THE vocation of Miss Jennie Vincent, the woman pilot of San Pedro Harbor, has attracted much attention from Eastern tourists in Southern California.

Miss Vincent is probably the only woman steamboat pilot in the world, and if she had not emigrated West from her paternal home for generations at Marblehead, Mass., she would no doubt be now engaged in some New England town in a pursuit that has been woman's for ages.

She is a slight, blue-eyed, light-haired, cheerful little lady of about twenty-three years. Her two elder brothers came to California to engage in the new industry of sardine packing on the Pacific coast. She came later to keep house for them.

Financial reverses came upon the brothers, and Miss Vincent, having no more house to keep after the Sheriff had had his sale, looked about for some employment in her new Western home.

She had always lived by the sea at Marblehead, and had been with an uncle for days at a time on a steam craft of which he was the engineer. From her childhood she had known how machinery in small propeller steamboats is operated, and she had many times tried her hand at piloting for her uncle.

So, when financial clouds lowered over the Vincent cottage at San Pedro, Miss Jennie resolved to become a pilot on the harbor there. She studied navigation, learned the laws of pilotage, and mean-

while earned some money as a pilot for a little tug in the harbor. Last September she passed an examination required by the State Board of Pilot Commissioners, and last January she held her certificate as a second class pilot.

She has in the past few months piloted Pacific coast ships into San Diego and San Pedro harbors. Miss Vincent makes from \$80 to \$120 a month as a pilot, and her ambition is to become so expert in a few years that she may pass an examination to do first-class piloting in San Francisco Bay, where she believes she can then make several hundred dollars a month. The pilot fees in California are \$8 per foot on the draught of the craft and also 4 cents per sack of merchandise. There are many vessels of 8,000 tons that come in San Francisco Bay, and the pay for them is \$250 each.

A NEW WAVE-POWER MACHINE THAT MAY FURNISH ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER FOR ALL NEW YORK

NOW that the sea surf along the New York and Jersey shores can be of no more use for bathing purposes this year, it is interesting to hear that it may be set to work running wave power motors during the winter.

Wave power motors have up to date proved about as useless as perpetual motion machines.

But patents were issued at Washington last week for a wave power machine built on a new principle.

It is a device "for harnessing the waves," as all wave power inventors express it, that is so simple that any one who has ever taken a surf bath can comprehend it.

When a big roller comes in and strikes a person squarely it is liable to knock him down. That kind of wave power is easy to understand.

It is exactly this striking force that the new wave motor is said to make use of.

The breakers dashing up a shelving beach hurl themselves against a cylinder head. This pushes back a piston rod, forcing water up a pipe with the action of a pump.

The water pumped up in this way is stored in a tank thirty to seventy-five feet high on the top of a nearby hill or bluff. It can then be used easily for running turbine wheels and generating electric power.

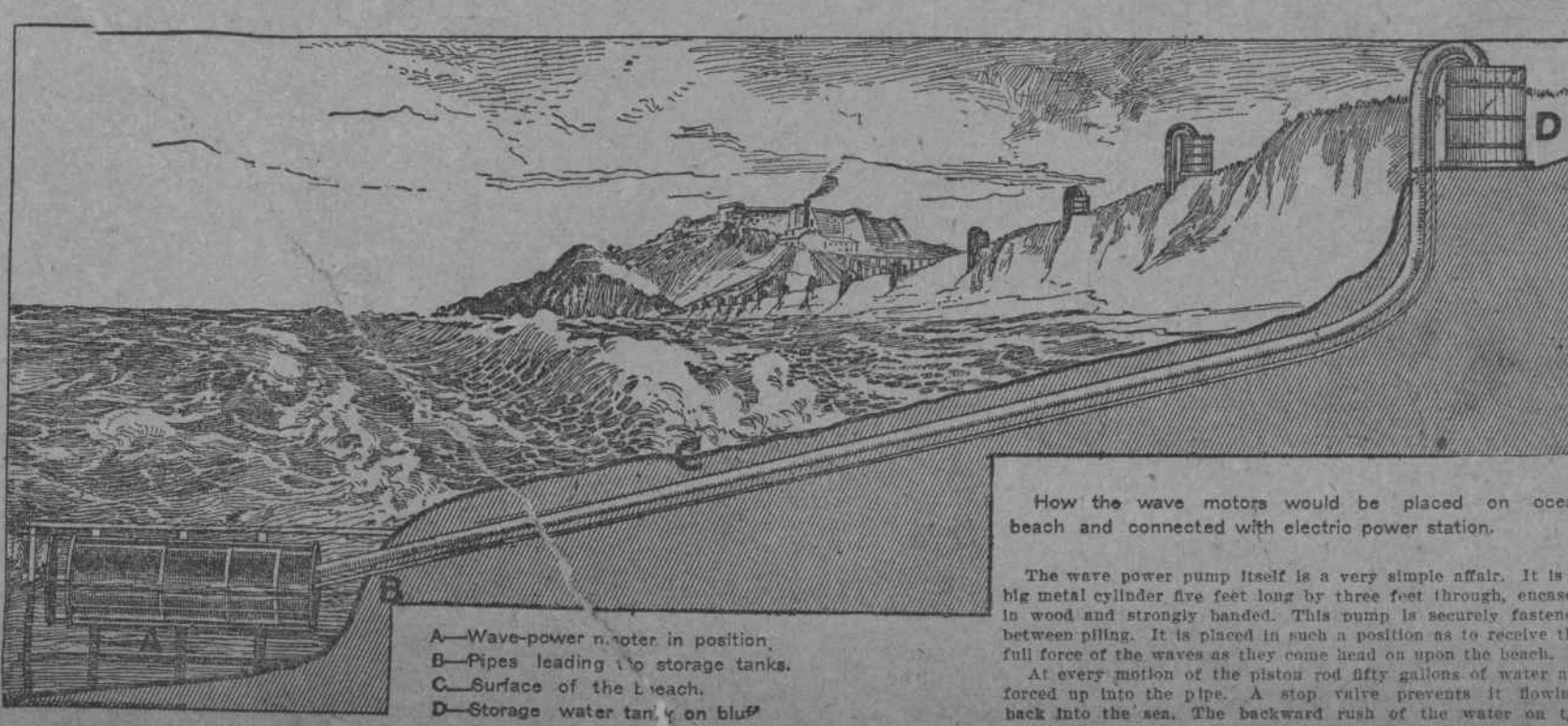
Mr. R. S. Lawrence, of Washington, is the inventor of this wave power system, which has just been patented.

He claims that on the shores of Staten Island and Long Island in Greater New York enough electric power can be developed by this device to run all the street cars, turn all the machinery and light every house in the whole city.

It makes a Niagara water power right at our doors, he says.

His plan requires the placing of pumps for miles along the beaches, and storing the electric energy which they develop in great power houses placed at convenient distances apart.

From these central power houses the electricity would be transformed into high and low voltage currents, and distributed for the various purposes of lighting and driving trolley cars and machinery.



A—Wave-power motor in position.
B—Pipes leading to storage tanks.
C—Surface of the beach.
D—Storage water tank on bluff.

How the wave motors would be placed on ocean beach and connected with electric power station.

The wave power pump itself is a very simple affair. It is a big metal cylinder five feet long by three feet through, encased in wood and strongly banded. This pump is securely fastened between piling. It is placed in such a position as to receive the full force of the waves as they come head on upon the beach.

At every motion of the piston rod fifty gallons of water are forced up into the pipe. A stop valve prevents it flowing back into the sea. The backward rush of the water on the beach forces the piston rod back into its original position. A

smaller pipe leading from the storage tank above also aids in the quick recoil of the cylinder.

The rolling in of the breakers will produce seven sledge hammer strokes per minute. This gives to each pump the capacity of storing 21,000 gallons per hour, and counting on fifteen hours' daily service, a pumping capacity of 315,000 gallons daily.

A thousand of these pumps could be placed in one mile of water front, yielding a pumping power of 300,000,000 gallons daily. This amount of sea water stored at a height of seventy-five feet could be converted into 6,000 horse power continuously for twenty-four hours. This is equal to some of the largest steam and electric power plants in New York.

It is such power stations put up wherever conditions permit along the Staten Island and Long Island water fronts that Mr. Lawrence, the inventor, claims would supply the whole city with light and power.

He explains that most previous attempts to utilize ocean waves have been by apparatus placed upon the top of the water, to rise and fall with the waves, thus working a pump, or air compressor, turning a crank or shaft; and the first storm or unusually high tide has ended the experiment with each by knocking the apparatus all to pieces.

His invention, Mr. Lawrence points out, is so placed under water, six inches from the bottom of an inclining beach, that it cannot be injured or seriously affected by storm, tempest, high tide or giant rollers; and the operation of the pump is by direct action.

It remains to be seen, however, whether this invention will stand the test of practical operation, or whether, like other wave power devices, it will prove merely an interesting experiment.

The accompanying picture shows the pump in position at "A," the pipes, "B," leading from the pump beneath the surface of the beach, "C," to the tank, "D," on the top of the bluff.

The hopeful belief prevails that at some period in the world's history the vast power of the ocean waves—one of the mightiest of earthly forces—which now wastes itself upon ocean shores, will be utilized for the benefit of mankind.